

(WASHINGTON) - U.S. Representative Chet Edwards has secured \$95,000 for the GEAR UP program in Hill County in the final 2009 Appropriations bill, which passed the House Wednesday by a vote of 245 to 178.

"Investing in keeping Hill County students in school means a more productive future for them and a stronger economy for all of us," said Edwards, a senior member of the House Appropriations Committee. "With our economy in a deep recession, it is more important than ever before for students to complete their education to help them prepare for the future, and I will continue to work with community leaders to support that goal. I want to commend community leaders for their strong support of this worthwhile program."

Specifically, the \$95,000 secured by Edwards will help the GEAR UP program prepare at-risk junior high and high school students in Hill and Bosque County academically and socially for college. GEAR UP is a joint partnership with Education Service Center-Region 12, local Independent School Districts, Hill College, Texas State Technical College, and McLennan Community College. GEAR UP-Education Service Center, Region 12 will serve as a community catalyst to increase the number of students who pursue advanced and enrichment courses, pass the state exam, and continue their education beyond the high school level.